

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-21 were pending in the Application. By this Amendment, claims 1-8 are being cancelled and claims 18-21 are being amended in order to advance the prosecution of the Application. No new matter is involved.

In Paragraph 1 on page 2 of the Office Action, the drawings are objected to because the boxes in Fig. 6A are not labeled. Applicants respectfully object to this objection and requests reconsideration thereof. As noted in lines 11 and 12 of page 15, Fig. 6B is a descriptive chart which corresponds to the flow chart of Fig. 6A. Fig. 6B has been included inasmuch as the flow chart of Fig. 6A leaves little room for the descriptions which are set forth in Fig. 6B. Nevertheless, in a good faith effort to comply with the requirement set forth in Paragraph 1 on page 2 of the Office Action, Applicants are including a replacement sheet for Fig. 6A. The replacement sheet contains labels similar to those which are set forth in the chart of Fig. 6B. In some cases, the labels had to be abbreviated because of space limitations. Accordingly, the basis for objection to Fig. 6A has been removed by the enclosed replacement sheet therefor.

In Paragraph 3 which begins on page 3 of the Office Action, claims 1-13 and 16-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,131,767 of Yamada et al. in view of U.S. PGPUB 2004/0197127 of Shibata et al. In Paragraph 4 which begins on page 8 of the Office Action, claims 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamada et al. '767 as modified by Shibata et al. '127 in view of U.S. PGPUB 2004/0159252 of Woodman et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed as they apply to claims 9-21. Claims 1-8 are being cancelled.

Briefly stated, the present invention provides a tape printing apparatus which prints a tape image by each dot line onto a tape. A plurality of heating elements of a print head are driven while the tape is moved in a longitudinal direction thereof relative to the print head. The heating elements are aligned corresponding to the dot lines of the print image in which dots are arrayed in a width direction of the tape. With this tape printing apparatus, the number of consecutive blank lines is inspected regarding the print image made up of a mixture of print lines which are the dot lines including the dots to be printed and blank lines which are the dot lines including no dots to be printed. Based on the number of consecutive blank lines, energy applied to the print head is adjusted.

In accordance with an important feature of the present invention, the duration of the consecutive blank lines is detected when printing is not consecutively performed while the tape is moved. This is described beginning with the last portion of page 39 and thereafter of the Specification. The advantages achieved thereby are described beginning at line 13 of page 9.

Claim 9 defines a tape printing apparatus which includes dot line analyzing means. In accordance with the invention, the tape printing apparatus of claim 9 further includes "means for detecting, based on the line analysis result, a duration of the consecutive blank lines when printing is not consecutively performed while the tape is moved, due to the consecutive blank lines on the tape in a longitudinal direction thereof"(emphasis added). None of the cited references show or suggest this important feature in accordance with the invention of detecting a duration of the consecutive blank lines when printing is not consecutively performed while the tape is moved. Therefore, claim 9 is submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over the cited art.

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Claims 10-16 depend, directly or indirectly from and contain all of the limitations of claim 8 so as to also distinguish patentably over the art.

Claim 17 defines a method of controlling printing by a tape printing apparatus, which includes analyzing each of the dot lines of the print image. The method of claim 17 includes the step of “detecting a duration of consecutive blank lines based on the line analysis result when printing is not continuously performed, while the tape is moved, due to the consecutive blank lines on the tape in a longitudinal direction thereof (emphasis added)”. Again, this defines an important feature in accordance with the invention which is neither disclosed nor suggested by the prior art. Therefore, claim 17 is submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over the art.

Claims 18-20, as amended herein, depend, directly or indirectly from and contain all of the limitations of claim 9, so that such claims are also submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over the prior art. Similar comments apply to claim 21 which, as amended herein, depends from and contains all of the limitation of claim 17.

In conclusion, claims 9-21 are submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over the prior art for the reasons set forth above. Therefore, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the Los Angeles, California telephone number (213) 337-6846 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

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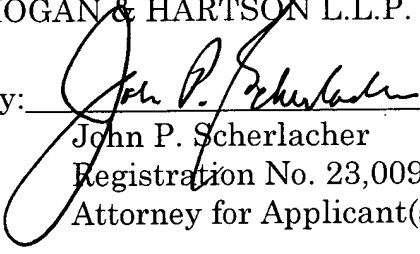
If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,

HOGAN & HARTSON L.L.P.

Date: December 7, 2005

By: _____


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Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Fig. 6A. This sheet, which includes Fig. 6A, replaces the original sheet including Fig. 6A. In Figure 6A, the boxes have been labeled as required in the Office Action.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet